

[Gluemania]

GLUEMANIA

The uniformed think there is nothing but writing done around a Writers' Project.

I object.

For nigh on to three years I have been everything from gem clip picker-upper to forty-inch envelope lick. I've licked so many envelopes that I can't eat dessert without first decapitating it to look for an enclosure.

Not being a writer, I have the official and misleading position of supply clerk.

This occupation includes supplying an attentive and sympathetic ear to all the trials and tribulations that befall the workers; which, in turn, gives an insight to their idiosyncrases.

The most consistent finder of catastrophes is the draftsman. He draws maps and raises pigeons, flowers, and Hell.

On pretty days, he gets discouraged and wants to go back. Where I don't know. Just back.

On rainy days, he complains of the chemical effect of dampness upon drawing paper and tracing cloth. I have no knowledge of either, but he calls me over to the board to show me the $\frac{1}{128}$ fraction of an inch difference in the circle on his map and the number which before the rain was inside the circle. His other pet peeves include the thickness of his tracing paper; an ink stopper that won't stay in the bottle; hair on his penpoints; water on the bone which causes pains in his propping elbow; and pigeons that refuse to lay more than once a day.

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While checking a tour, the tours editor saw an Indian mound. He retraced his steps, went to the library and read of the conditions that led to the eviction of the Indians, compared those conditions with the present one, and now contends that the Indians should be [????] charged with fraud.

The tours [?] editor also raises chickens and is distinguished by his fight against coccidiosis (chicken appendicitis). Chickens develop this ailment by pecking in the dirt. The tours editor prevents it by cooping his chickens atop his house. A roof without too much slope is recommended.

On the feminine side of our editorial staff is one who edits copy but not her conversation. For instance:

She mentioned that she is writing a book; [? ?????] had completed fourteen chapters. To show the proper interest, I asked how many words per chapter. She answered by reading to me the fourteen chapters and synopsisizing the next six.

The typists include a blond, a red-head, and a finicker.

The blond is very enthusiastic and explosive. Everytime I am comfortably seated, she yells for gem clips, carbon, or onion skin. I deliver the supplies and she wants to know [??] my opinion of her date of the night before and I finally escape after guessing how much beer he can drink before he passes out. She can drink 1 1/2 gallons. 3 The red-head bosses the boss, she bosses me; she bosses. I like red-heads, but she's obstinate.

The finicker is one of these prophylactic kittens who wouldn't lick an envelope if her life depended upon it. After I watch the writers until I learn how to write, I'm going to write an essay on world affairs and show how the affairs would be better if everyone attended to his own envelope licking.

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The man who wrote "Three Fools" for American Stuff sits nearby with a mosquito extinguisher pipe in his mouth; a jumble of copy for the "Alabama Almanac" on one side of him; and two or three essays on the other side. In his desk are four contests that he hopes to win and in his head are five or six stories that he expects to sell. But you he can't [??] be caught writing. He's either reading or hunting notes, but regardless of what can be seen with the naked eye, copy keeps turning up with his name across the top. All of which should add up to this moral: "A horse doesn't have to be a 'seabiscuit' to earn his bread and salt."

The Assistant Director is a drinking man. He walks in drinking, drinks all day, and walks out drinking. He drinks so many pops that the janitor has installed a soft drink stand in the office and is doing a thriving business on the nickels of the bosso secundo.

Between my desk at the front of the office and the State Director's desk at the back in front of the windows is an assortment of typewriter tables, chairs, wastebaskets, what-nots, and feet; all disarranged in perfect order.

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5,365.6 times a day the State Director calls for me to look for various and sundry articles, but mostly her glasses, a copy of Negro Life; Industry, Commerce, and Labor; her hat, coat, and overshoes.

Because I enjoy doing things the hard way, I close my eyes and swivel-hip through the obstructions like an All-American until I slam up against her desk with only the slightest of abrasions. Before I learned, I broke bones.

The impact opens my eyes. I glance bewilderedly over the mountain of copy on her desk; then blindly I point to where her glasses MUST BE under Industry, Commerce [?] and Labor which is under Negro Life which is under a fossil paper weight weighing seven

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pounds, a flower pot filled with some of the draftsman's flowers, and two dozen blue pencils that need sharpening.

While clearing these from the desk, the upheaval discloses [?] the hat, coat, and overshoes; a 1936 calendar; a pass to "The Birth of a Nation"; and a copy of the first bulletin on the "American Guide."

The excavation over and the lost articles recovered, I turn proudly and thread my way back to my seat, where I content myself with licking surplus envelopes until I am called again to the aid of some distressed worker.